

Trinity Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
Monday, April 24, 2017

Present: Rob Baldwin (Rector), Susan Terry (Assistant Rector), Steve King (Senior Warden), David Severance (Junior Warden), Andrew Hoyt, Jennifer Attocknie, Katie Bieker, Brenda Clary, Kim Mandle, Allison Marker, Dusty McCoy, Katherine McGillivray, Chuck Olcese, Bill Benso (Treasurer), Maria Thompson (Clerk)

Absent: Nora Clark

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Fr. Rob at 6:45 p.m.

Reading

Mark 1:1-15 was read and discussed.

Declaration of Quorum

A count was taken and a quorum declared.

Approval of the Minutes of the March 2017 Meeting

Kim made a motion to approve the Minutes of the March meeting. The motion was seconded by Allison and passed by unanimous vote.

Rector's Report – *in addition to Rob's written report (attached)*

Rob will look for descendants of the people who donated the stained glass windows that have been stored in the basement, and if any are found, he will discuss the proposal to use the windows in a chapel at Brandon Woods.

The Vestry requested that the windows have dedication plaques installed with them if they go to Brandon Woods.

Treasurer's Report

We are current on all financial obligations. Thanks to Steve King and the other vestry members who talked to the congregation about our debt at all three services on March 26th, a total of \$18,000 was given to service the loan. This will allow us to continue making payments through August. The final payment is due in December 2018.

Pledge income is currently at 21% of the budgeted amount.

The year-to-date budget for utilities is over by 38%. We know we have been overbilled for water, and our electricity sometimes spikes when multiple mechanicals come on at the same time; we need to look into and resolve these issues.

Audit

We've budgeted \$6,000 for an audit of the last two years' financial records, so Bill would like to contact Jim Long, who has done audits for us in the past, to get it scheduled.

Brenda made a motion to have Bill arrange for an audit. Katie seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Assistant Rector's Report

During the reading of the Passion on Palm Sunday, Susan took the children downstairs and walked them through stations depicting Holy Week events. It went very well, and she will plan to do it again next year.

We had 50 children here on Easter Day.

We will have a shower for Willow on May 7th. They have given us a list of things they can use, as well as things they really don't need.

Susan will be away on occasion during the summer to be with her son, who will be moving his family from Italy to Pennsylvania.

Senior Warden's Report

Debt Service

We continue to be committed to updating the parish regarding our debt at all three services on the Sundays that fall after Vestry meetings. The update was well received in March. The members who volunteered to give the updates on April 30th are: Andrew (8:00), Kim and Katie (10:30), and Brenda (6:00).

Committees

Steve discussed his list of committees and named the vestry members who will lead them:

- 1) Progressive Dinner – Katherine
- 2) Friendship Day – Kim
- 3) Harvest Festival – Chuck and Katie
- 4) Annual Budget – Steve and Brenda
- 5) Bylaw Changes – Brenda and Chuck
- 6) Pledges/Capital Campaign – Allison
- 7) Structural needs of the church building – Steve, Andrew and David
- 8) Vestry Nominations – Steve, Andrew, Jennifer and Nora, plus one at-large member who will be chosen from the congregation

Square

Katie will look into setting up a Square account for debt reduction donations.

Fund Raisers

Steve discussed creating coupon books as a fund raiser. We would essentially sell advertising to Lawrence businesses, then hand out the books to parishioners and newcomers. Steve will create a list of businesses and restaurants that he and other Vestry members can contact.

It was suggested that a silent auction during the Harvest Festival might be a good way to raise money. This is something that would take a lot of work to do well, so if we decide to do it, we will need to be committed doing the work it will take to make it a success.

Junior Warden

The drain/pit in the undercroft is still clean and there are no problems with it. The Christmas greenery that's stored down there still needs to be cleaned and aired out.

We had a fly infestation, but Schendel sprayed and there are no more problems with flies.

There was a good turnout for the cleaning day before Palm Sunday. Sally Hare-Schriner and others cleaned out the Hare Family garden.

The spotlights in the parish hall have been replaced with LEDs.

Steve King and crew stripped and polished the parish hall and hallway floor.

There is still one fluorescent light in the parish hall that needs a new ballast.

David handed out "Top 10 Finance & Administration Tips for Vestries."

Lawrence Interfaith Refugee and Immigrant Ministry

Refugee Sunday

The Episcopal Church asked parishes to hold a day to honor refugees and help with funding. Trinity has chosen May 21st to be our day. Funds collected on that day will be sent directly to the Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) office in Wichita.

Chuck made a motion to declare May 21st "Refugee Sunday" at Trinity and take up a special collection of loose plate and designated offerings that will be sent to EMM. Allison seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

DACA Scholarship Fund (see attached)

Chuck and Rob got answers to the questions the Vestry asked at the March meeting.

- Trinity would not be responsible for the fund raising to support the scholarships.

- Parishioner John Bullock will put us in touch with the Douglas County Community Foundation for help in setting up the account. Trinity will make the decisions about how the money will be spent once the account is set up.
- The diocese is supportive, but will require strict delineations between Trinity's money and the scholarship money.

Andrew made a motion to move ahead with plans to administer the DACA scholarship fund at Trinity via the Douglas County Community Foundation. Kim seconded. The motion passed, with 10 in favor and one opposed.

New Vestry Member

Dusty and his family will be moving to Wichita because of his recent promotion. Rob will contact the person who got the fifth-highest number of votes during the election at the Annual Meeting to see if she will take Dusty's position on the Vestry.

Expense Classifications

Brenda and Bill have discussed dividing our expenses into classes, and creating a Vestry subcommittee to monitor our expenditures and figure out why some of them end up way off from where we expect them to be. Bill will bring a list of recommended categories to the May Vestry meeting, and we will determine how many people will be needed to do this.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Thompson, Clerk

Rector's Report

April 2017

The obvious highlight of the month of April is Holy Week, and here is the post-liturgy analysis compiled by my staff and myself:

Palm Sunday: the decision to move the passion narrative to the end of the services was well received by practically everyone. We are discussing leaving in silence versus leaving to solemn music. The children's program during the Passion narrative went very well.

Maundy Thursday: Two stands for footwashing would expedite that process, with the second stand near the pulpit. We skipped the reading of the psalm during the stripping of the altar, and may put it back in. More information about what is happening and why in the bulletin would be helpful for those unfamiliar with the service. Questions were raised about having an overnight vigil, but past attempts have been lackluster in attendance.

Stations of the Cross: the service is largely unchanged, is fairly well attended, and draws some individuals we do not see at other services.

Good Friday: of all the Holy Week services, this one seems to demand the most attention for an overhaul. The service lacks emotional gravitas and the Solemn Collects fail to engage participants.

Easter Vigil: There were some technical difficulties with lighting the fire outside, and we are looking into some other options. This service is not understood well by most people, and some kind of introductory video on Facebook would be helpful. The rheostat-controlled lights on the north side of the church are not functioning, making the church darker than it could be, and the choir steps need to be lit during the service.

Easter Sunday: I personally was concerned about the safety of placing chairs in the center aisle of the church (a sentiment I received from several parishioners as well). A row of chairs can be placed in front of the modesty rail to provide extra seating without blocking major exit pathways. Next year we will move the chickenwire-covered cross to the atrium, rather than in the center of the aisle where it also blocks traffic.

Miscellaneous

The Episcopalian residents at Brandon Woods have been spearheading the creation of a dedicated chapel at the residential facility. They inquired about the possibility of re-purposing the stained glass windows currently in storage in the basement of the Matthew's Center to become part of a stained glass window in the chapel. The windows are from an earlier church building that was torn down, and the windows themselves have diagonal colored panes which can be removed from their lead casings and reassembled into a new piece. Since these windows have not been on display for years, if not decades, I do not personally have a problem with their being "recycled" for current Episcopalians to enjoy, but I want Vestry feedback.

Finally, I will need to have my insurance activated on June 1, 2017.

Report to the Vestry: DACA Scholarship Fund
Chuck Olcese

I'm reporting back to the Vestry on the item that I brought up last month -- the request for Trinity to host a scholarship for students who have registered under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

These are persons who were brought to the US by their parents while small children and are currently undocumented in the immigration system. President Obama created the DACA designation to allow them to stay with work permission and ability to get a driver's license. To get these benefits they have registered with the federal government. These young people would like to go to college (and can do so for Kansas resident rates), but have a hard time getting funding even for Community College since they do not qualify for any Federal Financial Aid.

We (the Refugee and Immigrant Ministry Group at Trinity) were approached last month by Centro Hispano, the main service agency for Latino immigrants in Lawrence, with the prospect of hosting a scholarship program for these students. There were some specific questions from the Vestry that I now have the answers for (below). I would like to have this on the agenda for the April meeting for further discussion.

Why Trinity and not St. John's where Centro Hispano is housed?

St. John's is running out of resource to help Centro Hispano (CH) with new initiatives and lacks someone who could be dedicated to it. CH itself would like the fund to be outside of their offices since they have too many personal connections with the possible applicants, and would like to see a broader coalition of Lawrence churches connected to their work. News of our Refugee and Immigrant ministry has gotten known quickly in Lawrence.

Would any fundraising be involved?

No, not necessarily. CH already has a volunteer who has raised several thousand dollars for this program and will continue to do so. They also have a plan through the Latino community to sell tamales at several events in Lawrence to continue to raise funds. Members of Trinity will be welcome to contribute, but we will not be responsible for the fundraising efforts.

Is Trinity taking on any liability?

No more than we would currently have for programs such as the Food Pantry. Trinity would just need to create a fund, collect and receipt the donations, and distribute the funds following decisions by a select committee. Trinity would have seats on the committee (several from the Refugee and Immigrant ministry group would be happy to serve) along with members from the Latino community and possibly others deemed necessary by any by-laws set up. I have contacted John Bullock (at the request of Father Rob) to help us with this process.

DACA recipients are already registered with the federal government, so we would not have any information that isn't already known. CH has also said they could redact personal information from any applications so the committee would only be looking at numbered applications to keep everything completely anonymous. Checks, of course, would need to be written to the recipients, so we would have names of persons in the end. This would not be anything that would put Trinity in jeopardy.

What permissions do we need from the Diocese or the Episcopal Church?

Father Rob has had some discussions at the diocese and national level, and all are very positive. He still needs to have a few more with people at the Diocese. We should have these answers by the next Vestry meeting.

Let me know if you have any further questions on this matter. I think it could be a very important commitment by Trinity to a particular part of our community in a time of great need.

Peace to you,
Chuck